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AUTHOR Brown, Ruth Murray
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APSTRACT

The most frequently chosen textbooks for introductory sociology courses are analyzed. The study reveals that sociology texts change through incrementation rather than through innovative thinking or by rational decisions as to the best way to present sociology to students. Sociology students are not considered in textbook selection; rather, professors tend to use books similar to the ones that they have used before. This survey of the 25 best selling textbooks concludes that successful authors follow the path laid before them. Once a concept becomes established in a text, it is likely to remain; the persistence of these traditional concepts means that the exposition of the text is not grounded in empirical research. However, the fault lies not with authors and publishers, but with those who choose and use the books. Since most professors prefer to use books similar to the ones that they have used before, it is not surprizing that the books do not reflect current research interests of sociologists or the latest information on the topics covered. The author suggests that a text be devised based on empirical knowledge and that a definition of sociology reveal itself as the student learns. References include a list of the textbooks analyzed. (KC)

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INCREMENTALISM, RATHER THAN INNOVATION

Introductory Sociology Texts 1894-1975

By

Ruth Murray Brown
Oscar Rose Junior College
Midwest City, Oklahoma 73110

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PRELIMINARY DRAFT
NOT FOR QUOTATION

INCREMENTALISM, RATHER THAN INNOVATION

Introductory Sociology Texts
1894-1975

American sociology is now about one hundred years old. In the early years, sociology had to accept crumbs from the table of the other academic disciplines, all of which were suspicious of the upstart newcomer. But even after the new discipline was firmly established, sociologists found themselves unsure of the boundaries of their discipline. This situation led to some wry definitions: "Sociology is that highly specialized science which deals with anything in any way pertaining to man." (Baber, 1931:325), and "Sociology is what sociologists teach." (Kennedy and Kennedy, 1942:661)

I am not at all sure that sociology is what sociologists teach, but the students who sit in our classes are nevertheless going to form their opinions about it from what we teach. Our students become the legislators of our states, the regents of our universities, the business and professional elites of our society, and the ordinary citizens who vote. So what they have learned--or not learned--about sociology is significant in its own right, even if it is not the "real essence" of sociology. Indeed, all the attempts to compare courses taught with the research interests of sociologists conclude that there is not much correlation between the two. (Podell, et al, 1959;Simpson, 1961)

Other researchers have looked at the treatment of particular topics in introductory textbooks at a particular point in time. Their conclusions, too, are usually critical--the textbooks do not reflect the latest and best information available on those particular topics. (Eister, 1949; Kirschner, 1973; Van Valey, 1975; Yellin, 1967)

My purpose in this paper was to develop a longitudinal picture of what students have actually been exposed to through the years that sociology has been taught in U.S. colleges. Reasoning that some books have been taught to more students than others, I have tried to select the most-chosen texts for detailed analysis. After reviewing twenty-five of these texts, dating back to 1894, I find that the most plausible explanation for their contents is simply that most professors prefer to use books similar to the ones that they have used before. Therefore, it is not surprising that the books do not reflect current research interests of sociologists or the latest information on the topics covered.

In this paper, I shall present the evidence for my general conclusion that the books have reached their present state by incremental change rather than by innovative thinking or even by rational decisions as to the best way to present sociology to introductory students. Analysis of particular topics will have to wait for another time and place.

Sociology, as represented in these introductory texts, is indeed a mixed bag. Although it has changed through the years, the changes can usually be explained by (1) current events of topical interest, or (2) the appearance of a very popular book in the field. Otherwise, the same topics recur in book after book, although they may be combined in different ways, or even be labeled differently.

Choice of Texts:

As sociologists, we may not agree on the boundaries of our discipline, but we do seem to agree on some rather distinct periods in the history of American sociology. They are: (1) The period of the Founding Fathers, 1889-1918

(2) The "Chicago" period, 1919-1935.

(3) Developing diversity, 1936-1951

(4) Growth of functionalism and of quantitative analysis, 1952-1968.

(5) The revolt against the "establishment, 1969-present.

I have used a variety of techniques to identify the five most popular textbooks in use during each of these periods. On four different occasions before 1935, sociological journals printed lists of the most frequently-used introductory texts, (Bernard, 1909:212; Chapin, 1910:19; Baber, 1931:330; Meroney, 1933:55) as determined by surveys of colleges or instructors. There are some problems with these data. In some cases, the reports do not indicate the actual number of schools using a textbook, but only the ranking of the books. Not all departments responded to the questionnaires, and it is impossible to weight the rankings according to the size of schools. But since no other data were available for the first two historical periods, I combined these lists to arrive at the five leading books for each period. Other things being equal, I gave preference to books written specifically for the introductory course, even though many schools in these early years used books written for other purposes.

For the next two period, I used the five books in each period which had gone through the most editions, and for the last period (the last ten years) I used the consensus of current publisher's representatives and editors. Obviously, these methods of determining the most popular or best-selling textbooks leave much to be desired; if more accurate information is available, I hope someone will bring it to my attention. In the meanwhile, the list below seems to be reasonably accurate. For

every period, there were one or two other books which might have replaced one of those chosen. I looked at these books also, and concluded that they were not greatly different from the ones I had chosen. I used the earliest editions available in nearby libraries, usually the first or second. The list below indicates the edition analyzed, the publisher, the dates of the various editions, the number of pages, and the price of the first edition.

1894-1918

1. Small, Albion W. and George Vincent. Introduction to Sociology. One edition only. American Book Co., 1894. 384 pp. $1.80

2. Dealey, James Quayle. Sociology. First edition. Silver, Burdett. 1909, 1920. 405 pp. $1.50

3. Fairbanks, Arthur. Introduction to Sociology. Third edition, 1903. Macmillan. 1896, 1901. 307 pp. $1.50

4. Ellwood, Charles H. Sociology and Modern Social Problems. One edition only. American Book Co, 1910. 331 pp. $1.00

5. Blackmar, Frank W. and Gillin, John L. Outlines of Sociology. Second edition. Macmillan, 1905, 1915, 1923. 586 pp. $2.00.

1919-1935

6. Bogardus, Emory S. Introduction to Sociology. Second edition (the first edition was a syllabus only). University of Southern California Press, 1913, 1917, 1922, 1925, 1931. 343 pp. $1.50.

7. Ross, Edward A. Principles of Sociology. First edition. Century Co., 1920, 1930. 708 pp. $4.00.

8. Park, Robert, and Ernest W. Burgess. Introduction to the Science of Society, Second edition. University of Chicago, 1921, 1924. 708 pp. $4.00.

9. Davis, Jerome, and Harry Elmer Barnes. An Introduction to Sociology, First edition. D. C. Heath, 1927. 926 pp. $4.48.

10. Dawson, Carl Edington, and W. E. Gettys. Introduction to Sociology, First edition. Ronald Press, 1929, 1935, 1948. 866 pp. $4.50.

1936-1951

11. Bogardus, Emory S. Sociology, First edition. Macmillan, 1934, 1941, 1949, 1954. 415 pp. $.2.50.

12. Young, Kimball. Introductory Sociology. First edition. American Book Co., 1934, 1939, 1942. 639 pp. $.3.50.

13. Sutherland, Robert Lee, and J. L. Woodward. Introductory Sociology, Second edition. J. B. Lippincott, 1937, 1940, 1948, 1952, 1956, 1961. 720 pp. $3.50

14. Ogburn, William F. and Meyer Nimkoff. Sociology, First edition. Houghton Mifflin, 1940, 1950, 1958, 1960, 1964. 953 pp. $3.50.

15. Cuber, John F. Sociology: A synopsis of Principles. First edition, D. Appleton-Century, 1947, 1951, 1955, 1959, 1963, 1968. 590 pp. $4.00.

1952-1968

16. Green, Arnold W. Sociology: An Analysis of Life in Modern Society, First edition. Mc-Graw-Hill, 1952, 1956, 1960, 1964, 1968, 1972. 579 pp. $5.00.

17. Merrill, Francis E. and H. W. Eldredge. Culture and Society, Second edition. Prentice Hall, 1952, 1957, 1963, 1969. 592 pp. $7.35.

18. Lundberg, George, et al. Sociology. Revised edition. Harper and Row, 1954, 1958, 1964, 1968, 785 pp. $6.50.

19. Bierstedt, Robert. The Social Order, First edition. Mc-Graw-Hill, 1957, 1963, 1970, 1974. 577 pp. $6.00.

20. Mack, Raymond, and Kimball Young. Sociology and Social Life, First edition. American Book Co., 1959, 1962, 1965, 1968, 1973. 484 pp. $5.75.

1969-1975

21. Broom, Leonard, and Philip Selznick . Sociology, First edition. Harper and Row, 1955, 1958, 1963, 1968, 1972, 1976. 661 pp. $6.50.

22. Horton, Paul B. and Chester L. Hunt. Sociology, Second edition. Mc-Graw-Hill, 1964, 1968, 1972, 1976. 528 pp. $7.50.

23. Popenoe, David. Sociology, Second edition. A. C. Crofts, 1971, 1974, 1977. 675 pp. $9.95.

24. DeFleur, Melvin, et al. Sociology: Man in Society, First edition. Scott, Foresman, 1971, 1974, 1976. 626 pp. $9.95.

25. Light, Donald, and Suzanne Keller. Sociology, First edition. Alfred A. Knopf, 1975. 570 pp. $11.95.

Books have increased in price, from $1.00 in 1894 to $11.95 in 1975. However, in 1894 dollars, the most recent book costs only 13¢ more than the first one--and it is almost three times as big. Students are getting more page area for their money now than they did in 1894. However, much more of the page area is now devoted to pictures, cartoons graphs, charts, and white space, as the publishers follow the general trend toward more visually attractive textbooks in all fields. For example, the number of visual illustrations on a forty-page sample of pages has risen from zero in the early years to thirty-six in the Light-Keller text of 1975. And of course, modern books now come with various auxiliary books--test manuals, instructor's manuals, and student study guides--and in some cases, books of readings.

One fact was immediately apparent when the books were lined up on a shelf in order of publication date. They have been growing in size throughout the years.

The early books were almost pocket-sized (5" X 6½") and less than 400 pages in length. The next group is somewhat larger (5½" X8½"). By the 1930's and 1940's, the books had increased to almost 1000 pages. The obesity of the books was attributable to the unwillingness of authors to cut out old topics. Until after World War II, each new topic or concept was simply added without removing any of the old ones. For a brief period,in the 1950's, books were smaller, but they hit another peak in size with the DeFleur text in1971. Their book had only 600 pages, but the dimensions, at 8" X 10", were the largest ever. Modern books are more like a cafeteria from which the instructor can select his own topics to be covered. In contrast, Fairbanks (1896) had called his book "a brief introduction to the subject."

The thesis of this paper is that textbook authors have been inclined to repeat what previous textbooks have done rather than to look for new and better ways to present introductory sociology. This becomes particularly evident after the influential Park-Burgess text of 1921. Before then, books were less uniform and more likely to express the author's own conception of what sociology was or ought to be. It is also true that after Park-Burgess, textbook authors were less likely to be "leading" sociologists in their own right--men who were ASS Presidents or who were developing theory and conducting research of their own. Before and including the Park-Burgess text, ten of the eleven authors were ASS Presidents. After that book, only four of twenty-nine were ASS or ASA Presidents. Further, all but one of the ASS Presidents before 1926 were textbook authors. Some of the more recent authors are or have been doing research and writing in a specialized field of sociology (Cuber, Broom, Selznick, D'Antonio, Lundberg, Bierstedt, for example) but many of them are simply specialists in textbook writing. This is probably inevitable; as the field expands, it is impossible for one person to have specialized knowledge of all of it.

In recent years, some authors and publishers have sought to cope with the proliferation of knowledge in sociology by producing "multi-authored" textbooks. The CRM book, Sociology Today (1973) and the new book edited by Reece McGee for Holt, Rinehart, Winston are examples. Even this is not a brand-new idea, however. Jerome Davis and Harry Elmer Barnes tried it in 1927, and confidently proclaimed that the multi-authored textbook would become the norm. It did not, then, but perhaps their prediction will yet come true.

The Park-Burgess text influenced the content of later texts, in ways which will be elaborated later. They also pioneered in their extensive use of readings, an idea which was copied by the next two books. Davis-Barnes issued a separate book of readings to go with their text, while Dawson-Gettys (1929) incorporated shorter

readings in theirs. No other text since has devoted so large a percentage of its space (61%) to readings as has Park-Burgess, but most texts since then have included some excerpts or condensations along with their own exposition. In recent times, both Popenoe (1971) and Broom-Selznick (1955) devote 23% of their space to readings.

Most introductory texts, even today, begin with a chapter of what I call "justification," in which the student (who, after all, has already enrolled in the course and purchased the book) is harangued about the importance and possible uses of sociology and given a definition of it. Present-day introductory chapters may also try to locate sociology on some kind of verbal "map of academia," describe the methods of sciology, or summarize sociological theory. I tend to agree with Kurtz and Maiolo (1968) that this chapter is unnecessary and/or meaningless to the student who is just beginning the study of sociology. But like the vestigial appendix, such a chapter, or chapters, served a useful purpose at one time. In those early years, sociologists needed to convince themselves, as well as others, that their discipline was worthy of a place in academic catalogues. The five books of the first period devoted an average of three chapters per book to such introductions.

Modern books, without exception, have at least one such chapter of general introduction, and about half of them have an additional chapter devoted to methods. The three topics covered in these early chapters--sociology's place among the disciplines, the uses of sociology, and sociological methods--will be discussed separately.

Sociology's Place Among the Sciences

In the early years, all of those who called themselves sociologists had been trained in other disciplines. They faced the social organizational task of competing with the established departments for funds, students, and recognition, as well as the cultural task of outlining the boundaries of their discipline and setting objectives for it. In the first period, the books averaged 11.8 pages for the discussion of sociology's place. In the earliest books, they began with Comte's hierarchy of the sciences. They agreed that sociology was one of the general sciences, along with history, which dealt with general principles. The special sciences, economics and political science, dealt with only one aspect of society. No wonder that some of the established disciplines resented the upstart newcomer! Fairbanks (1896:1) was especially patronizing,

> Economics is to be a branch of sociology; theology is to be driven from the pulpit by the new religion of social reform; law and morals may be put on a true foundation, the state at last may learn its true function, and the family its true meaning, because this new science has been discovered toward the close of the nineteenth century.

while Blackmar was a bit more conciliatory (1905:28)

> (sociology). . .should not attempt to displace or absorb either political economy, ethics, political science, or any other well-established social science. It should not attempt to be merely a generic term including all of them in a group, nor indeed is it a science built up of the parts of the several social sciences. . .It is an independent science having a separate existence and its own methods of investigation.

In the second period, there was an average of only 4.2 pages devoted to the problem of inter-science relationships, and in subsequent periods, many books ignored it altogether, while others dismissed it with a few pages. Evidently by the 1930's sociologists felt more secure in their positions as social scientists.

Even in the 1930's, however, sociologists still found it necessary to lay corner-blocks from three or four other disciplines before going on to build their own discipline's house. Davis-Barnes (1927) was the first to formalize this previously informal practice, and for many years, the practice remained. Davis- Barnes and Dawson-Gettys, the first two books to do so, devoted an average of 231 pages to four foundation-disciplines--biology, geography, psychology, and anthropology. In the next period, 1936-1951, there was an average of 166 pages for other disciplines. Most books by this time put their anthropological material in a chapter called Culture, and some of them called their psychological material Personality. The term "socialization" was now coming into widespread use; gradually the psychological material was put under this topic, and the Personality was dropped in the 1960's. Most modern books still carry the psychological and anthropological material, although the chapter titles have changed. The Bierstedt book (1957) was the last to include the chapters on biology and geography. Other books since Ogburn-Nimkoff (1940) had left them out or covered them more briefly in other chapters. In fact, the removal of the lengthy material on biology and geography was an important factor in the size reduction which took place after Ogburn-Nimkoff.

Sociological Theory in Introductory Textbooks

Some introductory texts now list three major theoretical orientations for sociology: functionalism, symbolic interactionism, and conflict theory. It is only since about 1970 that we have admitted to our introductory students that our discipline has this split personality, but we have been using the concepts of structure, function, interaction, and conflict for many years.

The concepts of institution, function, and group, are the oldest concepts in American sociology which are still in use; they appear in the earliest textbooks as well as in the latest. Small-Vincent and Blackmar-Gillin, under the influence of Spencer's organic analogy, spoke of "social organs." To express the same idea,

Dealey, Ellwood, and Fairbanks actually used the more modern word "institutions," which is not so modern after all, for Sumner had used it in Folkways (1906). The definition of institution in these early books was very similar to modern usage.

> An institution is a sanctioned grouping or relation in society. . .the functions of the family. . .justify the assertion that it is the most important and fundamental institution of humanity. (Ellwood. 1910:52)

> All of the higher animals, including man, instinctively act under the stimulus of the primary feelings of hunger and love. . .the intellect of man has been able to guide and control these fundamental feelings, and now economic and domestic institutions have arisen and developed in the process. (Dealey, 1909:90-91)

At this point, sociologists had not decided just what to call these fundamental feelings: instincts, stimuli, desires, needs, or social forces, but whatever they were, institutions were established to fulfill them. Lester F. Ward claimed credit (1897:142) for the first use of the term "social forces," which appeared in the early books in a specifically sociological way. It has now completely disappeared from the vocabulary of sociologists, although it is still enshrined in the title of a sociological journal, founded in 1922.

The list of institutions in the early books is not always the same as the modern lists, nor do the early authors agree among themselves. Ellwood insisted that the family was the basic institution, while Blackmar emphasized racial, economic, and educational institutions. The family is on everyone's list, down to the present day; the state or the political institution, and religion, are also fairly constant. But in the earlier years, Bogardus and Blackmar added Ethics, and Bogardus included Hygienic, Recreational, and Intellectual Institutions. Ross included the Recreation Center and the School. In the 1930's, Young listed Educational, Religious, Play, and Scientific Institutions, and Sutherland included Social Welfare and Health Institutions. Not until the 1940's did the list stabilize.

Kingsley Davis' 1949 Human Society influenced the format of all the introductory books since that time. His definition of an institution as "a set of interwoven folkways, mores and laws built around one or more functions," is essentially the same as Sumner's, and says about the same thing as Light and Keller:(1975:62) "The relatively stable, widely accepted clusters of norms and values that develop around basic needs of a society." Davis' list of institutions included scientific, economic, religious, political, and family

The chapter outline of the Davis book is reproduced, with minor variations, in all the popular texts since its appearance. It is probably only coincidence that the outline of Dealey's 1909 text was also very similar, for there were many variations in the intervening years.

Other evidences of the Davis influence in textbooks are the usages of the concepts socialization, roles, norms, and status. As Davis pointed out, it was not his purpose to develop new theory, and he did not originate these concepts. He wanted to integrate existing theory, and he was evidently very successful in doing so. What he put together has now become the essentials of what Mullins (1973:39) calls "standard American sociology."

The second type of American sociological theory, symbolic interactionism, traces its roots to George H. Mead and to the University of Chicago. Most sociologists now associate it with micro-sociology and with the so-called "soft" methods of research. Almost forgotten is the macro-theory which Robert Park, using Simmel as a foundation, built with the concept of interaction. The Park-Burgess text of 1921 was another very influential book for introductory textbooks--this and Davis' Human Society were probably the two most enduring in their influence. Neither of these books was written primarily as an introductory text, but both were used in that way--Park more so than Davis (probably because so many other texts were well-established by the time the Davis book was written.)

It is difficult to separate the contributions of the Park-Burgess text, as a text, from the contributions of the Chicago school of sociology, many of which found their way into later texts. This is especially so since the Park-Burgess book itself, laid down a program of research, much of which was taken up by Chicago students and professors. The Dawson-Gettys book, for example, introduced eight years later, incorporated many of the Chicago studies.

But there is one set of concepts which appears in almost every subsequent textbook which can be clearly traced to the Park-Burgess text. These are social interaction and the interaction processes of competition, conflict, accommodation, and assimilation. Processes had been mentioned before, but the concept of process was not clearly defined, and the lists were so diverse as to be almost meaningless. Fairbanks listed the"processes of social development" as dispersion, differentiation, and agglomeration. Ross had listed over forty different processes, a list which covered so many different kinds of topics that it was impossible to tell what he meant by "process." In general, these authors seemed to mean that the process were simply stages in the evolutionary development of human societies, which some of them called "socialization." This is confusing to modern readers, because we use "socialization" to refer to development of the individual self, not society as a whole.

Ellwood (1910:47) anticipated the Park-Burgess theory when he said that "competition and cooperation are twin principles in the evolution of social groups."

Park-Burgess also began with the two basic kinds of interaction, opposing and co-operative.

But Park and Burgess for the first time used the term social interaction, defined it clearly, and offered a comprehensible list of interaction processes. The same processes, competition, conflict, accommodation and assimilation, are still to be found in most modern books, but like the Cheshire cat, there is not much left but the grin. Park and Burgess devoted 281 pages (including readings) to the interaction processes, and Dawson-Gettys had almost as much with 232. In the next period (1936-1951) there was an average of 53.6 pages per book. Each book had at least two chapters on the processes. In the 1952-1968 period, the topic had shrunk to one chapter with an average of fifteen pages; in the current period, some authors have finally had the courage to leave it out altogether, but there is still an average of 6.2 pages per book. But in modern books, there is no more than a brief definition of the words and one or two examples for each one. All the richness of the concepts, which for Park and Burgess, were the framework for a theory of society, is gone.

Interaction refers to the way in which individuals and groups exert influence over one another, by stimulating and responding to one another. The terms were borrowed from biology and were used to describe what the authors perceived as analogous processes in human society. Competition was the kind of opposing interaction which took place without social contact--it produced economic equilibrium, just as competition in plant communities resulted in a balanced ecological system. Conflict, on the other hand, was opposing interaction with social contact. In the political order, conflict was the struggle for control and "control is the central problem of sociology." (508).

After competition and conflict have subsided or resulted in a stalemate, the other types of interaction come into being to help restore cooperative relationships. Accommodation implies subordination and superordination; it was under this heading that Park and Burgess discussed slavery, caste systems, and race relations--topics which are now covered under the heading of stratification. Assimilation implies a thorough-going transformation of the personality as a means of restoring cooperation. The Americanization of immigrants was an example of this process. Almost half of the Park and Burgess text was devoted to elaboration and illustration of these concepts; the theory encompassed historical trends, political, economic and social relations, stratification, and current American social problems.

Other concepts which have survived for varying lengths of time, and in various forms, are social control, social disorganization, and social change. The influence of Ross' Social Control, published in 1901, was very evident in the early books. Both

Dealey and Blackmar-Gillin refer to the book; from then on until the Ogburn Nimkoff text of 1940, all the authors except Bogardus devoted a chapter to the subject, and the chapters were simply a summary of Ross' book.

According to Ross, social control was accomplished by public opinion, law, religion, ceremoney, education, and personal ideals. After Ogburn and Nimkoff cut out the social control chapter, subsequent books followed suit, although the concept still appeared in the index. The coverage in the books since that time varies from two to eight pages; the discussion may or may not be patterned after Ross.

During the 1920's and the 1930's, the term "social disorganization" enjoyed a vogue as an explanation for social problems. The term was used by Cooley in Social Organization (1909) and by Thomas and Znaniecki in the Polish Peasant in Europe and America (1918), but its life in introductory textbooks was relatively short. Park (1921) used it first, and the last of these books to employ it was Cuber (1947). For a time, it was used in connection with social change, and that term proved to be considerably more durable.

The use of "social change" can be traced rather clearly to Ogburn's book (1922) with that title, the book which introduced the concept of "cultural lag." Ogburn himself called the results or cultural lag, "social maladjustment," rather than "social disorganization," but in his 1940 textbook, his thesis was that "social disorganization is caused by rapid and extensive change." (1940:877) Social change is still alive and well in introductory textbooks. Every one of these books since Park-Burgess has used it, and it is used in a chapter title in every one since Bogardus' 1937 text. Typically, it is near the end of the book--where one used to find social control and social disorganization along with social change.

Methods:

From the very beginning, sociology textbooks have insisted that sociology should use scientific methods, that it should not make off-hand recommendations without sufficient evidence (Small-Vincent, 1894:20)

> It is vicious to encourage students to speculate about great questions of social reform, before they have learned to know intimately the facts of social structures and functions. American society is likely to be sufficiently prolific of social disturbers, even if the colleges refrain from artificial propagation of irresponsible theorists.

However, the founding fathers, including Small, were themselves amazingly generous with off-hand opinions, and there was precious little evidence of any kind in these early books. When a sentence began with "no doubt," or "doubtless," one could almost be sure that it contained no evidence.

> Some phases of the "women's movement" have without doubt tended to lessen the birth rate in certain sections of American society. (Ellwood, 1910:150).

Even when there was evidence, the conclusions often ran far beyond it, as in this quotation a bit farther on in the same discussion of the birth rates by Ellwood:

> . . .for a population simply to remain stationary three children at least must be born to each family on the average. . .Under the best modern conditions one out of three children now born either fails to live to maturity or fails to reproduce. . .From the sociological point of view the ideal family would seem to be one in which from three to six children are born.

The chapters which were most likely to include evidence were those on population, for census statistics were available to everyone. Descriptive statistics, thus, were the most common kind of evidence. Few studies resulting in correlations were available at that time. However, those who call themselves scientists should try to avoid making statements which have no supporting evidence. I have already noted that the Blackmar-Gillin text was the first to make an effort to keep its statements within the bounds of available evidence. Blackmar and Gillin were not willing to pass on the popular myths and stereotypes of the day without at least commenting on the possibility of their being untrue.

During these years, while the textbooks were setting a poor example for students in the techniques of disciplined scientific thinking, they were also offering very little in the way of specific instructions for doing sociological research. Only Small and Vincent had much to say about it--and that was a summary of J.S. Mill's method. (However, their books would have been a good deal more careful in their statements if they had followed Mill's precepts and examples) Fairbanks (1896:22) concluded that experiments could not be used in sociological research, and that statistics would have only limited utility for sociology. Those authors who thought sociology could collect its own evidence recommended the "social survey." Students were not told much about how to do social surveys, however. Bogardus evidently did this kind of work himself, for he incorporated some of his findings into his books.

> From a personal investigation of about 100 dance-halls in Manhattan fully two-thirds were described as "positively undesirable." Liquor was found to be universally sold in the dance hall. Sometimes the period for drinking was found to be three and four times as long as the period for dancing. (1917:122)

One suspects that these social surveys were not much more than journalistic fishing expeditions. Bogardus himself was the most "preachy" of the early sociologists. (325)

> Any person with a sociological point of view would not engage in any business which is destructive and socially non-productive. If a lawyer, he would not assist clients to violate the laws of the land. If a citizen, he would place his interest in the government ahead of his own private interests for gain.

E. A. Ross, as well as the earlier writers, accepted the prevalent myths and stereotypes about "inferior" races, and expressed them in more colorful language.

> When the(illegitimacy rate is high)it is usually owing to the negroes, many of whom have the most primitive ideas as to sex obligation. (1920:16)

and

> There is an imposing stock of facts which seem to prove that the negro has a fiercer sex appetite than other men, that the South Italian has a bent for murder, that the Irishman has an uncommon taste for fighting, the Jew for money-making, the gypsy for wandering. . . (1920:60)

However, we are not favored with even one of this "imposing stock of facts." Bogardus had been a bit more tolerant, but rather patronizing. Park and Burgess were the first to attempt a scientifc analysis of the "race question." Although these authors stressed the importance of careful research, they were not entirely free of the tendency noted in so many of the earlier texts, of proffering off-the-cuff opinions without any supporting evidence.

> So today no state in the Union would have separate car laws where the Negro constituted only 10 or 15 per cent of its total population. No state would burden itself with the maintenance of two separate school systems with a negro element of less than 10 per cent. (1921:637)

In fact, of course, Oklahoma did have both separate car laws and a constitutionally-mandated separate school system, with a population of 7.3% Negro in 1920.

By the third period, textbook writers were being more careful about unsupported statements. In dealing with controversial questions--the question of race differentials in intelligence was a notable example--they tried to give all the relevant information on both sides of the question. There was still not much space given to actual instruction in sociological methods,however. In the first period, books averaged 9.8 pages on this subject; in the second period it dropped to 3.6, and in the third period it was only 8.4.

George Lundberg's 1954 text clearly departed from the norm, both in his insistence on evidence for his statements, and in his lengthy (50 pages) discussion of methodological issues and techniques. This is not surprising, of course, for Lundberg's career was devoted to insisting on scientific methods for sociology. Because of his book, the average number of pages devoted to methods climbed to sixteen in the fourth period, and possibly because of his example, most books after that time gave more coverage to methods. In the current period, the books average twenty pages for methods.

Our students probably learn more about the methods of sociology from observing how sociologists arrive at conclusions and evaluate evidence, than they do by actual

discussion of methodological issues. As we have seen, the early books set a rather poor example, by using little evidence at all. Modern books set a higher standard, that is clear, but there are still a great many unsupported assertions. To get a more precise measure of the kinds of evidence used in these books, I developed a five-point scale and used it on a sample of pages in each book. The scale is as follows:

1 = unsupported opinion or prescription for a social condition.

2 = explanation or illustration of a concept, using current events, public issues, or another culture or country.

3 = biological evidence, quotations from an authority or from a classic book in sociology (such as Durkheim's Suicide, Spencer's Principles of Sociology) or logical argument and analysis.

4 = descriptive statistics case studies, anthropological evidence.

5 = correlational studies using experiments, survey research, or collections of case studies, or statistical analysis.

Using a random-number table, I chose a number of pages in each book for sampling equal to one for each 30 pages of text. Then I looked at each page and assigned it a number from the scale above corresponding to the kind of evidence used. If there was more than one kind of evidence on the page, I assigned the highest number. Then I averaged the numbers for each book. There is undoubtedly some sampling error in these data, but in most cases the numbers were about what I would have expected after several months of studying the books. In general, the level of evidence increases through the years, but Lundberg is higher than the other books of his period, while Bogardus and Bierstedt are lower than the other books of their periods. The averages for each period show a steady increase, but even in the current period, the index is not high. The average for the first period is 2.02, for the second, 2.19; the third period shows an index of 2.4, and the fourth period averages 2.91. In the current period, it is 3.09.

Summary and Conclusions

This survey of twenty-five of the best selling textbooks since 1894 shows that since about 1930, at least, the successful textbook writers have tended to stay in the middle of the road--to follow the paths taken by previous textbook writers. A few extremely influential books--Ross' Social Control, Park-Burgess' Introduction to the Science of Society, Ogburn's Social Change, and Kingsley Davis' Human Society, have had a long-lasting effect on introductory textbooks, by introducing and debeating new concepts, or in the case of Davis, by synthesizing existing theories.

Once a concept becomes established in textbooks, it is likely to remain. Evidently it takes a great deal of courage to remove a concept altogether. Instead,

the space devoted to it becomes progressively smaller. Since new concepts are being added, however, two things are becoming increasingly characteristic of introductory textbooks. They have become a potpourri of unrelated concepts, each explained briefly and then seldom or never referred to again. This means that our students may indeed find that studying sociology is little more than "learning a rather unpleasant language."

Another trend which has been unmistakable through the years is that books become larger and larger (even as the number of hours in a typical semester becomes smaller and smaller) On two different occasions, books have become so large that a minor revolution was necessary to reduce them. Only then do some of the outmoded topics finally disappear. Thus the outline and the format of sociology textbooks has evolved to its present state, rather than being planned in any rational way for teaching effectiveness, or for clarity of presentation.

The opening chapter, which was once necessary to establish the place of a new and insecure discipline, seems to be particularly useless in modern books, and certainly cannot be defended on the grounds of its usefulness to introductory students . Two popular books before World War II actually dispensed with it, but it has now returned; it is in every textbook since 1940.

Further, the persistence of traditional concepts has meant that much of our exposition cannot be grounded in empirical research. It must be illustrated or explained rather than proven. We have not taught our students much about methods through the years, nor have we set an example for them in our textbooks; we have not insisted on providing evidence for our statements.

I recognize that an introductory text is not the place to look for the growing edge of a discipline's work; it should reflect what is agreed upon. I recognize further that there is an honest difference of opinion on how much introductory students can be expected to comprehend about current research methods, and on what our priorities should be in an introductory textbook. My point is that the best-selling textbooks become best-sellers, not by taking a stand on these issues, but by repeating what has gone before.

These conclusions may be interpreted as being critical of textbook writers, and to a certain extent, they are. However, my criticism is not of the authors or publishers so much as it is of those who choose and use the textbooks. The most plausible explanation for the present state of introductory textbooks seems to be simply "survival of the fittest." They may not be the fittest for a coherent exposition of sociology, but they are the fittest in the market-place. Occasionally a textbook makes a fairly significant departure from the past and succeeds. Lundberg's empha-

sis on empirical research is an example. Light and Keller's success in making sociology more accessible to undergraduates with low reading skills, while maintaining a high standard of sociological evidence, is another. They have even managed to explain one of Duncan's path analysis diagrams in terms that introductory students can understand!

On the other hand, there seems to be room in the market-place for at least one book which is more like the books of ten or twenty years earlier. Bogardus' books filled this place through the twenties and thirties, and forties; Bierstedt's book is filling it now. This seems to lend additional weight to the argument that many professors prefer what is familiar, even if it is outdated.

A Radical Proposal

What would happen if we would wipe the slate clean? How about zero-based conceptualizing? or a sunset law for sociological concepts? What kind of book would we have if we decided to include in it only those statements for which there is at least some degree of empirical support? And what if we decided to include and explain only those concepts which are needed to make those statements? Would there be enough statements to tell our students how society works?

I don't know what such a book would look like, but I'm sure it would be much shorter than the current comprehensive models. If such a book were possible, I would like to see it begin, on the very first page, with some of the interesting and exciting things that sociology does know, perhaps in the area of interpersonal communications or small groups, since these seem to be the favorite topics of introductory students. Let the definition of sociology reveal itself as the student learns sociology; let the methods of sociology become apparent as the classic research projects are reviewed or replicated. Let the controversies about theory or public policy present themselves where they occur naturally in the exposition of how society works. And let the unnecessary concepts and issues fade silently away--no one can cover 600 pages in one semester anyway!

Such a book would not be easy to write, and it might not sell if it were written. It may be that we are all so wedded to our yellowing notes that we can not tolerate any but the smallest increments of change, as the authors and publishers seem to think. If so, we can look forward to more and more books which are more and more alike.

Some Numerical Comparisons Among the Five Historical Periods' Textbooks

Number of Books in each period using selected concepts:

Concept:	First Per. '94-'18	Second '19-'35	Third '36-'51	Fourth '52-68	Fifth '69-'75
Group	4	4	5	5	5
Institution	5	4	5	5	5
Interaction	0	2	5	4	3
Interaction Processes	0	3	4	4	1
Social Control	1	4	4	4	4
Social Change	0	3	5	5	5
Social Disorganization	1	2	5	1	1

Average Number of Pages in books of each period devoted to selected subjects:

Subjects:					
Sociology Among the Sciences	1.8	4.2	0	2.6	.9
Other Disciplines: Geography, Biology, Anthropology, Psychology	173	102.2	166	120.7	73.4
Interaction Processes: Conflict, Competition, Accommodation, Assimilation	0	128.8	53.6	15	6.1
Methods: Issues and Techniques	9.8	3.6	8.4	16.6	20.2

Average Scores of sampled pages in books of each period on methods index*

Scores:	2.0	2.2	2.4	2.9	3.1

*Index is as follows: (see text, page 15)

1 = unsupported opinion or prescription for a social condition

2 = explanation or illustration of a concept, using current events, public issues, or another culture or country

3 = biological evidence, quotations from an authority or from a classical book in sociology, or logical argument and analysis.

4 = descriptive statistics, case studies, anthropological evidence

5 = correlational studies using experiments, survey research, or collections of case studies, or statistical analysis.

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